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Index

SL. No.	Content Detail	Page No.
1)	Introduction	03
2)	Objectives	06
3)	Scope and Limitation	07
4)	Review of Literature	07
5)	Hypothesis	07
6)	Research Methodology	08
7)	Data Collection	08
8)	Chapter Scheme	08
9)	Bibliography	10

The Critical Study of the Cinematic Adaptations of Chetan Bhagat's Novels

Introduction:

A film adaptation is the transfer of a work or a story, in whole or in part, to a feature film, although considered a type of derivative work, the film adaptation has been theorized recently by academic scholars such as Robert Stam as a dialogic process. While the most common form of film adaptation is the use of a novel as the basis, other works adapted into films include non-fiction, autobiographical works, comic books, plays, scriptures, historical sources, and even other films. In 1924, Erich Von Stroheim made an effort for a literal adaptation of Frank Norris's novel *McTeague* with his film "Greed". The resulting film was nine and a half hours long and was cut to four hours at studio insistence. It was then cut again to around two hours. The result was a film that was largely incoherent and irrelevant. Since that time, few directors have attempted to put everything in a novel into a film so the process of elision becomes crucial.

Films and novels differ in many ways, and because of these differences the way they convey their themes, plots, and characters will necessarily differ. Three of the most obvious differences between films and novels are found in the scale, the level of realism they convey, and the reflection of the author or filmmaker's ideology.

A film may be inspired by a novel, but it utilizes a different vehicle through which to tell its story. Films are visual and aural and they are consumed passively

in a collective environment—usually in a theatre with an audience, but also in the home, often in the presence of friends and family. Reading involves an active process of decoding words and creating visual images in the imagination. And unless the Nineteenth Century practice of reading aloud in the parlor reemerges, reading will remain a solitary, personal activity. The differences between our process of enjoying each genre, however, do not assume that the active is necessarily better or worse than the passive. They are just different activities and the products need to be judged by a different set of criteria.

Adapting material previously published in another genre is not something that the film industry invented. Classical Greek playwrights adapted myths that had been passed on through an oral tradition; Shakespeare appropriated materials for his plays from various sources. And as soon as the makers of cinema recognized that telling a good story in moving pictures required a "good story," adaptations of novels, plays, and short stories became commonplace. Shortly thereafter, critics began to analyze these adaptations, and various schools of thought developed.

In some cases, film adaptation also includes scenes, events, and characters. This is especially true when a novel is part of a literary Legend. Incidents or quotations from later or earlier novels will be set into a single film. Additionally, and far more controversially, filmmakers discover new characters or create stories that were not present in the source material at all. Given the expected audience for a film, the cinematic writer, director or movie studio may wish to increase character time or to invent new characters. However, characters are also sometimes devised to provide the narrative voice. There have been several notable cases of massive invention adaptation, change is essential and practically unavoidable, mandated both by the constraints of time and medium, but how much is always a balance.

Some film theorists have argued that a director should be entirely unconcerned with the source, as a novel and film is a film and the two works of art must be seen in separate entities. Since transcription of a novel into a film is impossible, even holding up a goal of "accuracy" is absurd. Others argue that a film adaptation is changed to fit (literally adapt) and the film must be accurate to the effect (aesthetics) the theme, or the message of a novel and that the film must introduce changes, if necessary, to fit the demands of time and two maximize faithfulness along one of those axes.

Chetan Bhagat is an Indian author, columnist and Youtuber. He was included in "Time" magazine's list of the World's 10 Most Influential People in 2010. He has written ten novels and three non-fiction books. Five of Chetan Bhagat's novels have been adapted into Bollywood films like "Hello" in 2008 based on *One Night @ the Call Centre* (2008), “3 Idiots” in 2009, "Kai Po Che!" in 2013, “2 States" in 2014 and "Half Girlfriend" in 2017. Bhagat has also written scripts for Bollywood films like "Kick" in 2014 and won the Filmfare Award for Best Cinematic play for "Kai Po Che!" at the 59th Filmfare Award in 2014. His latest novel *400 Days* which is based on a missing child and forbidden love was released on 8 October 2021.

Five of his novels have been adapted into movies. Regarding the film 3 Idiots released in 2009 (based on his novel *Five Point Someone*), Bhagat alleged that the makers of the film had not given him adequate credit. For Kai Po Che (2013) based on his novel *The 3 Mistakes of My Life*, Bhagat was one of the four screenplay writers. The film was a commercial success and Bhagat, along with Pubali Chaudri, Supratik Sen and Abhishek Kapoor won the Filmfare Award for Best Screenplay for Kai Po Che! at the 68th Filmfare Awards.

Chetan Bhagat as a writer has hit the right strings of Indian youth. If readers have an analysis of all his novels, they all have one thing in common, the characters.

His novels have a decent vocabulary and a real-life aspect of the college-going crowd. Bollywood needs scripts that can well connect with the audience. Chetan Bhagat has provided a wholesome meal for the celluloid. Chetan Bhagat never wrote literature novels. What he wrote were readymade scripts for films. In literature, one has to find scope to fit in song and dance routines while in his novels, he always left to the space or rather created situations where the director can easily insert Bollywood songs.

The proposed research work will focus on the cinematic adaptation of the selected novels of Chetan Bhagat, he has presented ample scope through his writings for the cinematic adaptation due to his lively narration. It will also take into account the various techniques that Chetan Bhagat used in his novels which made cinematic adaptations easy. The select novels for a research study are *2 States: The Story of My Marriage (2009)***,** *Five Point Someone: What Not to Do at IIT (2004)***,** *The 3 Mistakes of My Life (2008), Half Girlfriend (2014), One Night @ Call Center (2005)* written by Chetan Bhagat.

Objectives

a) To critically analyze the quality of Chetan Bhagat's writings to attract the filmmakers for adaptations.
b) To discuss the techniques and theories used in cinematic adaptation from novels.
c) To discover how the script is different from the story.
d) To reveal the role of setting, location and characterization, etc. while transforming into a cinematic adaptation.
e) To study critically the values added to the novels of Chetan Bhagat while transforming them into the films.

Scope and Limitations

The proposed research work is an attempt to study the select novels written by Chetan Bhagat which are adapted for the cinematic. Chetan Bhagat's novels represent contemporary modern real-life stories. The scope of the study will be to focus and discuss various adaptation theories, kinds, techniques and changes that occurred while transforming the novel into a film. For the data collection, the secondary sources for the defined critical study may be scarce.

Review of Literature

Research has been done in the field of cinematic adaptation in Indian English fiction. However, Chetan Bhagat remained much unexplored from the point of a critical study of his writing techniques to attract filmmakers. This aspect of the investigation is not touched by many researchers. It can be discussed thoroughly in the proposed study.

Hypothesis

a) The directors of the films based on Chetan Bhagat's novels applied various adaptation theories, kinds and techniques.
b) Chetan Bhagat's novels deal with real-life stories and explore the contemporary situation.
c) Writer has used innovative techniques of writings to present novels in the field of fiction.
d) Chetan Bhagat's techniques of writings and presenting the situation in film scripts are different.
e) Chetan Bhagat's writings attracted filmmakers to adapt their writings for the cinematic.

Research Methodology

The researcher will use descriptive and analytical methods for finding the facts. The study will be based on primary and secondary sources. The primary sources will be the original texts and secondary sources will be the books, research articles and material available in the libraries and on the internet.

Data Collection

The proposed research work will be carried on by applying Qualitative Research Methodology and data will be collected from the following sources:

1. Primary Data Collections will be from the original texts of Chetan Bhagat and books on Cinematic Adaptations.
2. Secondary data will be based on research articles, previous research, journals and reviews, etc.
3. The interview of Chetan Bhagat and interactions with other eminent scholars will form a source of secondary data.
4. Web sources will be another source of secondary data.

Chapter Scheme

The tentative chapter scheme is as follows-

Chapter I- Introduction

The first chapter will focus on introducing Cinematic Adaptation Theories and techniques. It will discuss the following points:

1. Defining literature, film, and cinematic adaptation
2. The history of Cinematic Adaptation
3. Various theories of film adaptations
4. Kinds of Cinematic Adaptation

5. Cinematic Adaptation of Chetan Bhagat's Literature

Chapter II- Review of Literature

This chapter will cover the review of research articles, journals, critical reviews, M. Phil. and Ph. D. thesis having topics related to the film adaptation of Indian Novels.

Chapter III-The Critical Study of Major Themes and Aspects Reflected in the Selected Novels of Chetan Bhagat

This chapter will analyze critically the Cinematic Adaptation of the select English fiction of Chetan Bhagat. It will also discuss the major themes like education, culture, marriage, relationship, etc. and aspects like language, location, characterizations, setting, etc. For this study, the selected novels of Chetan Bhagat are *2 States*: *The Story of My Marriage*, *Five Point Someone: What Not to Do at IIT, The 3 Mistakes of My Life, Half Girlfriend* and *One Night @ Call Center*.

Chapter IV-The Critical Study of the Cinematic Adaptations of Chetan Bhagat's Novels

In this chapter, the critical analysis of the Select Cinematic Adaptations of English fictions by Chetan Bhagat will be covered. This chapter will also explain the different ways Chetan Bhagat deals with the novel as a genre. Chetan Bhagat displays contemporary life situations which help filmmakers to present reality with pictorial quality providing ample scope for the filmmakers to produce films. This chapter will also discuss the various techniques and theories used by filmmakers while transforming into the film.

Chapter V- Conclusion

This chapter will evaluate the accomplishment of the proposed hypothesis and objectives of the research study with the help of critical observations and interpretations.

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